Raj Institutions, model citizen's charter, visit of Area Officers, constitution of vigilance committee and deputation of task force teams to check irregularities and to inspect and monitor the TPDS and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, Conference of State Food Secretaries, State Food Ministers meeting with All Indian Fair Price Shops Dealers Federation, and a meeting with all the members of Parliament was organized for strengthening of TPDS Regional Conferences are also being held with focus on the unique problems of the region and to facilitate strengthening of the TPDS in a manner, which may be relevant to the local environment. The recommendations made at these fora are at various stages of implementation.

Funds for food subsidy

1093. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of fund allocated for food subsidy during the current year and how much amount out of it is proposed to be spent on the purchase of foodgrains for below poverty line families;

(b) whether it is a fact that leakage and diversion of foodgrains under the Targeted Public Distribution System has now gone upto 60% and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to do away with this system and if so, the details thereof and what alternatives Government have chalked out to help the poor persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) An amount of Rs 26,031 crore has been allocated as food subsidy for 2005-06.

In the budget estimates, an amount of Rs. 16,684 crore is the estimated subsidy to be incurred on issue of foodgrains to families below poverty line (BPL), including Antyodaya families during 2005-06.

(b) No report of such large scale diversion has been received from any of the State Governments/UTs. However, an evaluation study of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) conducted by the Planning Commission covering eighteen major States has observed that out of the

subsidized foodgrains under the TPDS there is leakage of about 19.71 per cent at Fair Price Shops (FPS) level and about 16.67 per cent of the foodgrains is diverted through ghost cards. In addition, the TPDS suffers from diversion of subsidized grains to unintended beneficiaries (APL households) because of errors of inclusion. However, the report is based on old primary data of 2001-2002. As several changes like introduction of Antyodaya AnnaYojana (AAY), change in the scale of issue, etc. have taken place since then, it is difficult to totally rely on this report.

(c) No, Sir.

Village Grain Bank

1094. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have initiated a scheme for establishing "Village Grain Banks all over the country;

(b) if so, the salient features of the scheme along with its objectives;

(c) whether any proposal to this effect was submitted to Government;

(d) the details of the grains to be provided to the banks;

(e) whether millets and pulses would also be included to be provided to these grain banks; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is proposed to establish Village Grain Banks in chronically food scarce areas to safeguard against starvation during the period of natural calamity or during the lean season when the poor in village households do not have sufficient resources to purchase the ration. The scheme envisages inclusion of all willing Below Poverty Line and Antyodaya Anna Yojana families in the villages to become members of the grain banks. The estimated cost of setting up of each grain bank is Rs. 60,000.00 including Rs. 1800.00 to be born by the State Government as 50% share of transport cost. Each Grain Bank of (average) 40 Below Poverty Line (BPL). Antyodaya